Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure for sending acknowledgement as well as final replies to letters received from the Members of Parliament and MLAs by the officers of the Central Government which may inter-alia relate to various development schemes. As per these guidelines, communications received from Members of Parliament should be attended to promptly. Each communication is to be replied to within 15 days. Where a delay is anticipated in sending a final reply or information has to be collected from officers other than the office to which the letter pertains, an interim reply should be sent within a fortnight indicating the possible date by which a final reply can be given.

(b) There exists no system for centralised tabulation of replies sent or still pending for reply with officers in various government offices. Hence it is not possible to state in how many cases reply to MP letters has not been given by the officers.

(c) No information is available on this point. The guidelines stated above are not applicable to the officers of State Governments as the State governments generally prescribe their own guidelines in this regard.

(d) All officers in the ministries/ departments of Government of India are expected to observe the guidelines laid down in paras 57 & 60 of the Manual of Office Procedure Any violation of the procedure is dealt with as per existing disciplinary procedures.

Pay Commission's Recommendation for pensioners

2380 DR MOHAN BABU
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Fifth Central Pay Commission had recommended payment of at least half of the minimum of the revised scale to pensioners;

(b) if so, the reasons for not agreeing to the recommendation; and

(c) whether, as a welfare measure, Government would consider implementation of the above recommendation, to give relief to pensioners who are hard-hit due to price rise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The recommendation of Pay Commission for the consolidation of pension in respect of all pre-1.1.1996 retirees, in accordance with the formulation given by it, has been accepted. In the case of pre-1986 retirees, The Government has also accepted the recommendation that before such consolidation, their pension may be updated by notional fixation of their pay as on 1.1.1986 by adopting the same formula as for the serving employees. The Government considers that the above measures will provide adequate relief to the pensioners.

(c) Does not arise in view of answer to part (b) above.

Withdrawal of Circular on Seniority of SC/ST Officers

2381. SHRI SUSHIL BARONGPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of Supreme Court's Judgements in the cases of Shri Jagdish Lal and others V/s State of Haryana and Ashok Kumar Gupta V/s State of U.P. dated the 7th May and 21st March, 1997, respectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof;